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SUMMARY

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Madagascar

COTTON IN MADAGASCAR

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Following a period of investigations which started in 1953, cotton growing has been developed in the Tulear region since 1956. At present it covers an area of approximately 1,200 hectares. Cultivation of the cotton plant is practised in this sector in two forms - dry, watered only by the rain, or using irrigation. There are also two forms of cotton cultivation - the private plantation and the Peasant Community sector.

The I.R.C.T. has to solve for the two types of cultivation the different problems which arise:-

for determining the zones allotted to cotton;

in the sphere of varieties, where tests have indicated preferences;

for Acala 1517 C under irrigated cultivation, yielding a high quality fibre;

for Stoneville 2B under dry cultivation;

each of these varieties being furthermore selectively treated in order to improve some of their deficiencies.

In the field of agronomy, principally on the following points:

Setting up methods of cultivation;

study of the wilting of the cotton plant under irrigated cultivation on alluvions;

determination of irrigation system characteristics.

Studies are in progress on soil development under cotton cultivation, on the cultivation possibilities of soils with a thin alluvium stratum on coarse sand, and on the fertilisation of poor soils.

In the field of phyto-sanitary protection where the necessity has been established of treating with insecticides, providing preventive protection by the application of a programme of treatment using a mixture of DDT and endrine.

The future of cotton cultivation appears to be bound up with the development and establishment of fitting out companies as regards collective ventures, and with the introduction of an agricultural credit policy and government support as regards the private plantations. Markets for the fibre will be easily provided by setting up a local industry manufacturing yarns.

S - 1472 E - Nov.1962 - 1,600